

## EXTRACTIONS

**DO NOT DISTURB THE AREA:** For the next few days, and especially the first 24-hours, it is very important to allow your body to form a good clot and start the natural healing process. Swishing, sucking on a straw, smoking, and spitting can all dislodge the clot. Keep anything sharp from entering the wound (crunchy food, toothpicks, utensils, etc.). Be sure to chew on the opposite side for 24 hours.

**BLEEDING:** When you leave the office, you might be biting on a gauze pad to control bleeding. Keep slight pressure on this gauze for at least 30 minutes. Do not change it during the first 30 minutes, as the clot needs to remain undisturbed. After 30 minutes, you may remove or replace it with new gauze. Bite on additional gauze or a tea bag if you feel that the socket continues to bleed. Small amounts of blood in your saliva can make the saliva appear quite red; this is normal and can occur throughout the first 24 hours.

**SMOKING:** Smoking should be discontinued following extractions for 3-4 days. Healing and success of the surgery will be substantially reduced by the cigarette smoke and chemicals. Smokers are at a greater risk of developing a painful "Dry Socket."

**PAIN:** Some discomfort is normal after an extraction. To minimize pain, take two (2) Advil, Tylenol, or similar non-aspirin pain reliever every 4 hours until bedtime. Carefully follow dosage limits on any packaging. Take these pain relievers BEFORE your anesthesia wears off. If prescription pain medication is given, take it as instructed on the label without exceeding the dosage. Take pain relievers with food or milk to help avoid an upset stomach. Avoid driving, operating heavy machinery, and drinking alcohol while on pain prescriptions.

**SWELLING:** Applying an ice bag to the face over the extraction site will minimize swelling. Apply for 15 minutes, then remove for at least 15 minutes, and repeat throughout the first day. Swelling is generally the most noticeable on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> days post-op.

**NUMBNESS:** The local anesthetic used will cause you to be numb for several hours after you leave the office. Use this time to take your first dose of pain medication, and be careful not to bite, chew, pinch or scratch the numb area. In some cases, residual numbness or tingling can last for 6 weeks or longer.

**BRUSHING/ RINSING:** Avoid brushing the specific extraction site for the first 24 hours; other areas of your mouth should continue to be brushed. Do not rinse or swish for the first 24 hours; after this time, you may use a saltwater solution ( $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt +  $\frac{1}{2}$  baking soda + 8oz warm water) several times per day and especially after meals. Avoid using commercial mouth rinses for several days.

**DIET:** Eat soft foods for the first 24-48 hours with an emphasis on maintaining a good, balanced diet and staying well-hydrated. Avoid alcohol consumption for the first 24 hours and while taking prescription pain medication.

**ANTIBIOTICS:** If you were given an antibiotic prescription, take ALL of them as directed until gone. **WARNING:** Some antibiotics can reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills, so consider alternative methods of birth control for two (2) months.

**ACTIVITY:** After leaving the office, rest and avoid strenuous activities for the remainder of the day.

Please call our office at **(336) 621-4927** if you have any questions or concerns, or if you experience any of the following:

- Uncontrollable pain
- Excessive or severe bleeding
- Marked fever
- Excessive warm swelling occurring several days after the procedure
- Reactions to medications; especially rash, itching or breathing problems